

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)
FOR THE MIAMI URBANIZED AREA

A G E N D A

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2002 AT 7:00 P.M.
F. ROLLE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER
3750 S. DIXIE HWY.
MIAMI, FLORIDA

I. PRESENTATIONS:

A. GRAND AV. MASTER PLAN - H. Bernstien

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. DISCUSSION:

A. BICYCLE FACILITIES DESIGN - D. Henderson

IV. ACTION:

A. BPAC RECOMMENDATION

OPENING REMARKS	-	LS: Welcomed everyone. Normally, BPAC meetings are held in South Miami. This site was chosen to better accommodate the residents of Coconut Grove to attend. The redesign of Grand Av. is important to cyclists. The entire meeting will try address concerns of those in attendance: residents, businesses, municipal, design, cyclists, etc.
PUBLIC WORKS PRESENTATION	-	JC: In an effort to improve travel in the West Grove, the PW Dept. involved the community in redesigning Grand Av. from McDonald Av. to Douglas Rd. The goal is to eliminate 2 lanes and incorporate traffic calming. There were 2 previous public meetings, mediated by the UofM and L.P. Zyberk consultants, proponents of neo-traditional designs. The results were different from those designs being shown tonight. PW is recommending a balance between the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. Currently, there are 5' sidewalks, the design being shown allows for (a minimum) of 7'. At the corners, bulb-outs would be 15' wide. This allows for 4' bike lanes on both sides of the road. A landscaped, raised median would provide left-turn bays as well. The Master Plan process is about to proceed to design. The UofM recommends no bike lanes, with very wide sidewalks. This presents a problem because of pedestrian/cyclist and automobile/cyclist conflicts, since the lanes will be too narrow for them to pass each other. Grand Av. presents a good connection to existing and future bikeways. If bike lanes are provided, simply striping the rest of Grand Av. to US-1 can result in an accommodating route for cyclists to/from the Grove/Metrorail, etc. There isn't any funding for construction, yet. Coming to the meeting, several cyclists were spotted using Grand Av.; all of them were not in proper position, which bike lanes promote. In the past, PW constructed Green & Whites: separate paths along a roadway for cyclists and pedestrians. Over the years, it was apparent that conflicts along paths are more prevalent than on-road facilities. Typically, motorists don't look to the right and take into account that a fast-moving cyclist may be approaching an intersection. They also tend to block paths as they attempt to merge with other roadway traffic. Bicyclists on the road are seen by motorists.
B/P COORDINATOR PRESENTATION	-	DH: His office is responsible for bicycle planning for Miami-Dade. Within the Grand Av. project there are opportunities to better accommodate/ensure the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians, along with landscaping to beautify the area. This will enhance the bicycle/pedestrian character of the Grove. It encourages healthy transportation; which can combat the US/Miami-Dade epidemic of obesity. The images shown provide examples of what cyclists face with various roadway designs. An 11' lane with curb/median traps automobiles and bicyclists without room to pass each other. Without a median, a car can pass, swerving over the centerline. This image doesn't include on-street parking, which would pose another hazard: opening doors of parked cars. Although very wide sidewalks provide an opportunity for cyclists to avoid these roadway hazards, it presents other problems. In fact, statistics show sidewalk riding to be nearly twice as hazardous as roadway cycling, because of conflicts with pedestrians, driveways and intersections; often due to riding against the expected direction of traffic. In some cities: Bal Harbor, South Miami and possibly the Coconut Grove area in the future, sidewalk cycling can be banned. As more sidewalk cafes are introduced in this area, conflicts become apparent. The last image shows how bike lanes can eliminate the roadway/sidewalk conflicts. Bike lane striping helps to psychologically slow down traffic. This is an older facility without updated markings that would encourage cyclists to travel in the correct direction of traffic. In previous meetings, alternative routes were suggested. This is a scapegoat for many proposals. But, alternative routes only accommodate through-traffic. Neighborhood cyclists will still begin/end their travel to

		shops/schools on Grand Av. An alternative would force cyclists to travel further and deter them from businesses along Grand Av. The same issues would be relocated to that corridor.
BPAC VIEWPOINT	-	<p>LS: As an advisory group of volunteers, the BPAC is concerned with the safety/education to benefit cycling throughout the county. This particular project has an opportunity to improve safety to/from the 3 elementary schools in the area. It can promote tourism, and enhance local transportation options. He observes many cyclists commuting along Grand Av. every morning. Although very wide sidewalks can promote cafes, bike lanes are a more necessary provision to ensure safety. This is our obligation.</p>
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION		<p>PK: Inquired how wide the sidewalks would be with bike lanes.</p> <p>JC: Typically, 7'; where there isn't parking (e.g., corners) - 15'. A development that wants 15' sidewalks in front (for tables) could request the elimination of parking stalls.</p> <p>WJ: Inquired how this meeting was scheduled. There aren't many representatives from the West Grove in attendance.</p> <p>DH: The LDC and the NET office help distribute notices. In addition, past contacts residing in the Grove were sent flyers.</p> <p>WJ: The community has been discussing this project for 5 years, suddenly bike lanes are being proposed within the past 6 months. The community is concerned with economic development, similar to the East Grove. Inquired where bike paths are in the East Grove.</p> <p>JC: A bicycle facility starts at the Rickenbacker Cswy., proceeds down South Miami Ave./Bayshore Dr. towards McFarlane Rd. to Main Hwy. to Douglas Rd. The Grand Av. bikeway would link this to the M-Path (e.g., via Fuller St.). If they are introduced in this segment, the striping of bike lanes would be extended along all of Grand Av.</p> <p>WJ: This isn't a compromise. The alternative route is only one block over. Florida Av. has enough room for a bikeway. The community wants wider sidewalks on Grand Av. Parking is critical to economic development. This is more important than accommodating a gang of 12-25 cyclists on Saturday mornings. They don't stop in the Grove.</p> <p>JC: Many residents of the West Grove ride bicycles.</p> <p>WJ: Grove residents know how to get around without bike lanes.</p> <p>BS: When this road is narrowed, conditions will be unsafe to access Grand Av. shops.</p> <p>BH: There were requests for wide sidewalks in northern Miami Beach, similar to South Beach for economic development. Yet, there are still vacant store fronts. Sidewalk width doesn't determine prosperity. Connectivity without the need automobiles is important.</p> <p>TS: Federal/State/County laws mandate the consideration of bikeways where feasible. Planners often overlook this, whether ignorant or otherwise. Although, there are claims that the community wants more businesses for economic growth; the environment, tourism, sprawl and quality of life cannot be swept aside. There is only a 3' difference in the sidewalk widths. The majority of through-cyclists use Main Hwy. Throughout the day/night, local cyclists are using Grand Av. The extra 3' on the sidewalks are not going to bring huge amounts of business dollars. Sidewalk cafe's hinder pedestrian movement everywhere tables are placed. Any city that is known to be bicycle-friendly is a city that has economic prosperity aided by cyclists. This is an opportunity to connect two major bikeways. The 7' sidewalk is a compromise. The BPAC has had to remind Project Mgrs. of the need for bikeways at the last moments of development, which in turn had raised construction costs; instead of them designing it right the first time.</p> <p>WJ: The community is concerned with the environment. West Grove has been neglected.</p>

YM: There had been plenty of opportunity for the MPO to discuss these issues earlier. This is a disservice to the community. The community isn't opposed to bike paths; but, we need a comprehensive plan for the Grove. The western redesign of Grand Av. doesn't include bike lanes. There is a path in the Grove already.

LS: The City of Miami didn't endorse a bike path on Grand Av. when it was being redesigned. The BPAC is trying to enhance the area & correct mistakes.

JC: The original design for Bird (Grand) Av. called for a center turn lane. The City of Miami requested a change. The results are better for cycling.

LS: There was an inquiry about the final decision maker on this issue; the MPO Governing Board has the final say. The BPAC can only recommend.

YM: There were 4 original designs presented in the beginning of the community meetings. Only 1 of them contained bike lanes.

DH: Last year, the BPAC held workshops on developing bicycle facilities, for the Bike Plan update. The most popular area to be better served was along Bayshore Dr. down to the heart of Coconut Grove. He hopes cyclists attend future public meetings, because at the Grand Av. meetings, while the issue of bike lanes was presented, it was usually sidestepped. Sidewalks and raised medians were more discussed. It seemed the mediators already determined that bike lanes wouldn't be a serious consideration. He raised the safety and community needs issues, but they were set-aside. The final votes were taken by only 5-6 people. There wasn't an overwhelming consensus against bike lanes. The extra 3' of sidewalk will not make economic development a success.

UNK: It seems that only a few people are making major decisions. There is a safety issue. He was a participant of Bikeways Now, which was able to get a lot of bikeways built in the past. The cycling community isn't vocal. These meetings need more publicity.

UNK: Would like to eliminate political baggage. He is an avid cyclist living in the Grove. The other places he's lived in don't have the anti-bike lane attitude being displayed. As a business owner, he welcome bike lanes. One of the reasons he likes the Grove is because it is bike/walk-friendly. He doesn't understand why bike lanes are not welcomed.

LS: Other communities (e.g., Pinellas County) have experienced huge economic gains where bikeways were constructed. The UofM staff have conceived an area which integrates both work and living dwellings, to reduce automobile dependence. The history of the village always had a large cycling population.

RK: He commutes by bike. One goal is to consider 5-10 years from now. Not only for Grand Av.; but, anywhere bikeways can be constructed, they should be. Two/three feet of sidewalk will not determine the prosperity of a business. He likes sidewalk cafes, but the broader picture has to be viewed. Bicycles, shuttle buses and mass transit will help commuters avoid the eventual automobile traffic jams.

UNK: He is a cyclists, and agrees to everyone's point of view. However, the historical aspect has not been addressed. The "black" Grove has been forgotten. Developers will dissipate residents. There should be a compromise.

RK: Inquired about the striping on Pinetree Dr. The width is less than 4 feet.

BH: Those are essentially paved shoulders. Miami Beach doesn't have dedicated bike lanes. There were plans for such; but, Miami-Dade Public Works wouldn't allow them.

TS: There are specific dimensions that have to be conformed to before they can be considered dedicated facilities. There are other bikeways that are not 10' paved, separate facilities. The BPAC has met with other developers to workout compromises. Federal/state/local laws require consideration of bikeways, in whatever form that can be

feasible. Perhaps 2' is only available; this would benefit cyclists with some sense of comfort. The community along SW 112 St. fought to have the road designated historic, just to avoid bike lanes being constructed. Now, they can't even put 18" shoulders to improve the safety of the road. Whatever neglect the "black" Grove has experienced, this is not one. We are following guidelines, and this is an improvement to existing, hazardous conditions. Ignoring these guidelines would be special treatment and setting precedence. Miami-Dade is an embarrassment throughout the world for the number of bicycle-related deaths/injuries. These people were not the experienced cyclists riding packs on Saturdays. They were the cyclists going to work, school or the store within the community.

DH: Other future bikeways include SW 48 St., west of Tropical Park to SW 82 Av.

BH: Miami Beach doesn't have wide r-o-w required to stripe-out bike lanes. There are 22 miles of separate bikeways planned.

DH: Homestead/Florida City and South Miami are developing new bikeway plans. Broward County has a very aggressive/successful bike lane development plan.

BH: Downtown Palm Beach has also introduced bike lanes; traffic calming, (e.g., reducing lanes, bulb-outs, etc.) This has led to substantial economic growth.

PK: Staff should provide examples at the next meeting to verify economic prosperity would be feasible. These should be local, because the West Coast is a different culturally.

UNK: San Francisco is cold much of the year, and they are very bicycle-friendly.

MN: It is good to have dialog regarding getting people out of cars. Believes bike lanes belong in this design. It is important that sidewalks accommodate multi-pedestrian movement. Improving the tree canopy is very important. There are constrictions where trees are installed. People won't be able to walk side-by-side if the sidewalks are only 7'.

LS: Requested the audience to view the design being proposed.

PK: The community saw the options and they made a decision. There aren't bike lanes in the Downtown Kendall, Coral Gables, or South Miami Master Plans. It is Commissioner Morales' view that the people who live in this community should take priority.

GR: Automobiles waste too much land. He is a patron of the Grove often; parking his car and cycling throughout the Grove. This design as a compromise; leaving on-street parking. Connectivity is important. Without these small segments being redesigned, there isn't a cohesive network. There is enormous apathy to critical issues from the cycling public to attend any meeting in Miami-Dade, no matter how many notices are sent out.

WJ: This isn't a compromise. Route cyclists just one block over; there's plenty of room.

LS: There were a two e-mails received in support of bike lanes. One from a woman living on SW 27 Av.

JC: Grand Av. is County-owed, PW won't spend funds on a city roadway redesign.

LS: Action on this issue will be deferred until the next meeting.

{ The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.